



THE MILITARY COALITION

201 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 838-8113

Dear Representative Stark,

The Military Coalition (TMC), a consortium of nationally prominent uniformed service and veterans organizations representing more than 5.5 million active duty, Guard, Reserve, retired and former servicemembers plus their families and survivors, is writing to urge you to vote for H.R. 3961 to reverse the 21% reduction in the Medicare and military TRICARE physician payment rates that will take effect as of January 1, 2010 unless Congress acts before that date.

The Coalition is extremely disappointed that Congress has not already acted to fix this flawed statutory formula that, if left uncorrected, will impose a cumulative 40% payment reduction over the next several years.

The cuts are particularly problematic for millions of TRICARE beneficiaries -- including active duty, National Guard, and Reserve families; retirees; and survivors -- who reside in areas where there isn't a large military population or military hospital. The last thing our troops in combat should have to worry about is whether their sick spouse or child can find a doctor to treat them.

Further, hundreds of thousands of Medicare patients enrolled in physical, speech, or occupational therapy are at risk of having that treatment cut off on January 1 unless the current exemption is extended.

Republicans, Democrats, the Senate, the House, and the Administration may have some differences over the details of a fix or the specifics of funding sources, but it is long past time to resolve those differences and get a fix into law immediately.

Congress simply must put military and Medicare beneficiaries' health care access above political and partisan concerns and ensure this vital issue receives urgent and immediate action.

Sincerely,

The Military Coalition
(Signatures enclosed)

Air Force Association
Air Force Sergeants Association
Air Force Women Officers Associated
American Logistics Association
AMVETS
Army Aviation Association of America
Association of Military Surgeons of the United States
Association of the United States Army
Association of the United States Navy
Chief Warrant Officer and Warrant Officer Association of the US Coast Guard
Commissioned Officers Association of the US Public Health Service, Inc.
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
Fleet Reserve Association
Gold Star Wives of America
Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America
Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Of America
Marine Corps League
Marine Corps Reserve Association
Military Chaplains Association of the United States of America
Military Officers Association of America
Military Order of the Purple Heart
National Association for Uniformed Services
National Guard Association of the United States
National Military Family Association
National Order of Battlefield Commissions
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association
Non Commissioned Officers Association
Reserve Enlisted Association
Reserve Officers Association
The Retired Enlisted Association
Society of Medical Consultants to the Armed Forces
United States Army Warrant Officers Association
USCG Chief Petty Officers Association
Veterans of Foreign Wars